

To my knowledge, the Republican leader of the Senate still has not referred to Joe Biden as President-elect. Will he change his tune now that the electoral college has once again confirmed his victory? Will the rest of my Republican Senate colleagues do the same?

After no evidence of widespread voter fraud was found in the country, after State election officials corroborated the accuracy of the results in every State in the country, after the Trump campaign's legal team racked up an astonishing win-loss record of 1 and 59, after the Supreme Court summarily dismissed two ludicrous efforts by Republicans to invalidate the results in swing States, will the Republican Party in Congress, here in the Senate, finally acknowledge the results of an election that was determined over a month ago?

Just how long are Republicans going to keep up this charade, which has become a national embarrassment? Even now, the Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee is planning to hold a hearing this week about what he calls "election irregularities."

Look, our Republican colleagues don't have to like the results of the election, but they have a solemn responsibility to accept them. They have a duty to confer legitimacy on them. Instead, for the past month, they have given President Trump the space to promote wild conspiracy theories about election fraud and poison Americans' faith in our democracy.

As the electoral college casts the majority of its votes for Joe Biden—the same number of votes that President Trump called a landslide 4 years ago—our Republican colleagues must do now what they should have done a month ago: Accept the legitimacy of Joe Biden's election to the Presidency of the United States.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Thomas L. Kirsch II, of Indiana, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as we all know by now, late Friday evening, the world received the news that we have been waiting, hoping, and praying for since March. The first COVID-19 vaccine was approved here in the United States. The vaccine was developed by Pfizer and its German partner BioNtech and was found to be 95 percent effective in preventing COVID-19 during clinical trials—extensive clinical trials.

The leaders of Operation Warp Speed immediately mobilized the distribution plan, and the first doses of the vaccine are arriving at healthcare facilities across the country today. Texas's initial shipment of nearly 225,000 doses will be administered to our healthcare workers this week by our healthcare workers, and we will provide these heroes with the protection they need to continue their fight on our behalf on the frontlines.

This is a turning point in our war against COVID, and the significance of this victory in such an expedited timeframe cannot be overstated. I want to thank the brilliant men and women who made this feat possible. There are the researchers and scientists who developed the lifesaving vaccine, as well as the volunteers who participated in clinical trials. There are the manufacturers that are rapidly producing millions of doses and distributors who are getting those doses to sites across the country as quickly as possible. Of course, there are the hospitals, pharmacies, and our incredible healthcare workers who will lead the vaccine effort. The race to a COVID vaccine will be remembered as one of the greatest human achievements of our generation, and these brave and brilliant individuals helped make it possible.

I want to remind all of us that while this is a huge milestone and one that should absolutely be celebrated, we are not out of the dark yet. The light at the end of the tunnel is getting bigger and brighter, but we still have a ways to go, and each of us has our own part to play in getting us there. For the American people, that means stopping the spread through the same habits that we learned all year—washing your hands, wearing a mask, practicing social distancing, and taking extra care to protect our most vulnerable friends and neighbors. Of course, this holiday season is not a time to forget the habits we built over the last several months but to double down on them.

While this is a development to be celebrated and a day we have been looking for for a long time, Congress has not yet done its job. For months on end, the American people have asked for additional financial support to weather this storm, and so far we have not seen any progress. Our Democratic colleagues blocked bill after bill, saying more of the words of Speaker PELOSI: Nothing is better than something.

Well, our Democratic colleagues stood in the way of investing more in vaccine distribution, extending unemployment insurance benefits, helping our small businesses keep their workers on payroll, and giving our schools the resources they need in order to provide education to our students safely. Our Democratic colleagues didn't block these bills because they disagree with the content of the bills; they simply refuse to engage if we do not concede to their controversial and outrageous demands.

At first, Democrats refused to back off the completely absurd bill passed in the House called the Heroes Act, which includes things like diversity studies for the marijuana industry and tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires. While they eventually realized how unrealistic their position was, they now stand firm in providing a bailout for cities and States that have been—some of which have been grossly mismanaged for decades.

Over the last several months, our Democratic colleagues have repeatedly blocked legislation that would have poured half a trillion dollars more into our fight against COVID-19 because it didn't include their far-fetched, partisan priorities. Our Democratic colleagues have wasted a lot of time in playing games with this pandemic relief, and the clock on this Congress is quickly running out. Congress needs to pass another bill this week, and I encourage our Democratic colleagues to start compromising and quit the grandstanding. They have shown us time and again, when you sit down at the negotiating table with an all-or-nothing attitude, the result is always nothing, and that is all they have to show for their obstruction over the last months since we passed the CARES Act.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. President, on another topic, last Friday, another important thing happened—the Senate passed the National Defense Authorization Act with broad bipartisan support and sent it to the President for his signature. This marks the 60th year in a row that we have completed the defense spending bill, and that is as it should be. Our national security is the No. 1 priority here in Washington, DC, and for our entire Nation.

Texas servicemembers will receive higher salaries and stronger support for their families because of this legislation. That includes assistance for military spouses whose careers involve relicensing, and it includes high-quality childcare on military bases. This legislation will also bring some serious updates and improvements to Texas military bases. Joint Base San Antonio, Joint Bases Fort Worth and Fort Hood, and the Pantex Plant in Amarillo will all receive additional funding for updates and facilities to improve their capabilities and mission readiness.

Given the uncertain state of today's world, preserving our military readiness has never been more important. Russia is growing more aggressive in its efforts to disrupt the global order. North Korea continues to provoke the United States and our allies with its nuclear aspirations. Iran's hostile and unpredictable actions threaten democracies around the world, not just in the Middle East. China has become increasingly powerful and more belligerent than ever. The Defense Authorization Act is how we prepare to counter these growing threats at every corner of the globe and improve our national security across the board. We do that through the time-honored notion of peace through strength. The best way to avoid a war is for America to remain strong.

I am incredibly proud that this legislation includes language from a bill I introduced with Senators WARNER, COTTON, and SCHUMER—a bipartisan bill. The goal of this legislation is straightforward—to bring semiconductor manufacturing back to the United States. Since 2000, the United States has dropped from producing roughly a quarter of the world's semiconductors now down to about 12 percent, and the semiconductors that make up your iPhone or that go into an F-35 are sole-sourced from a Taiwan semiconductor manufacturing company, obviously located overseas.

If we have learned one thing from this virus, it is of the vulnerability of our supply chains, and it doesn't take a lot of imagination to understand, with the threat to our economy and the threat to our national security, that the sole-source supply chain should be disrupted. There are the obvious economic consequences. Why buy these chips from other countries when we could be making them ourselves? We could boost an entire industry, including high-paying jobs right here in the United States. As I said, that is only part of the equation, because semiconductor manufacturing isn't just about the economy and jobs; it is about national security. Chips aren't just in televisions, dishwashers, and consumer electronics; they are a vital part of our cell towers, missile defense systems, and other critical infrastructure.

If you need an example of just how important it is to have a reliable supply of our most crucial devices, just look at the PPE shortage during the COVID-19 crisis. China has long been a supplier of masks, gloves, gowns, and other personal protective equipment used primarily by our healthcare workers. For a long time, that wasn't really a problem, but then COVID-19 showed that it was a problem.

By the time the virus began to move across the United States, China had been battling it for months. So when it came time for American hospitals and clinics and healthcare providers to beef up their supplies of PPE, their supplies had already been depleted. Healthcare workers, you will recall, were reusing

masks throughout an entire shift in order to conserve supplies, and hospitals were pleading with the general public to donate any unused personal protective equipment to help keep healthcare workers safe. We didn't reach that point because of a lack of preparation by hospitals but because of our reliance on vulnerable supply chains—notably, out of China—to produce that gear.

Now imagine a supply chain breakdown happening for every industry that relies on semiconductors. Everything from healthcare, to telecommunications, to agriculture, to manufacturing would be paralyzed by a disruption of that supply chain. So one thing this virus has taught us, among other things, is to eliminate those supply chain vulnerabilities, and it is a clear signal that we need to take action to secure other critical supply chains beyond just semiconductors.

The inclusion of this provision in the NDAA was a strong start. We had a great vote of 96 Senators voting for the inclusion of this provision in the National Defense Authorization Act—strong bipartisan support. This provision in the NDAA will help restore American leadership in semiconductor manufacturing by creating a Federal incentive program through the Department of Commerce to encourage chip manufacturing here. It will stimulate domestic advanced semiconductor manufacturing and boost both our national security and global competitiveness. It will enable us to bring manufacturing jobs back to American soil so we can reduce our reliance on China and other foreign countries and strengthen the supply chains of our most critical industries.

Now comes the hard part—we have to pay for it. On Friday afternoon, I spoke with Secretary Pompeo and Secretary Ross about this legislation from, as I said, both national security and economic perspectives. Last month, the Commerce Department sent a report to the Committee on Appropriations detailing its plans to implement a semiconductor manufacturing incentive program. For everything from the authorities that will be used to establish the program to the coordination with industry leaders, the Commerce Department is ready to hit the ground running. Both the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Commerce agree—Congress must act soon and back these programs with funding.

It is estimated that China will spend \$250 billion on semiconductor manufacturing in the coming years. If left unmatched, it will control 80 percent of the semiconductor manufacturing market. If that happens, the United States will not be able to recover lost ground, which is why it is critical that we act now. Thankfully, with the help of private industry here in the United States, we can do more with less. We can stop the slide of manufacturing power to China if we put even 10 percent of what China is spending toward

this essential element of our national security and our economic competitiveness.

The Senate passed this amendment over the summer with overwhelming support. I hope my colleagues on both sides will join me in continuing to fight to secure funding for this bipartisan priority, which will bring manufacturing jobs back to the United States and close a glaring and dangerous national security gap.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BIDEN INVESTIGATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, for over a year, Senator JOHNSON and I investigated the Biden family's financial dealings. For over a year, the liberal media and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle falsely said that we were peddling Russian disinformation. They ginned up any story they could to falsely portray our investigation in an effort to delegitimize the report's findings. Even my colleague Senator WYDEN, with whom I have worked on many bipartisan investigations, said the following:

This disinformation also became the basis of the Johnson-Grassley investigation. The political nature of this investigation has been clear all along. Bottom line: The Johnson-Grassley investigation is baseless. It is laundering Russian propaganda for circulation in the United States.

It seems the liberal media and Democrats have a very nervous tick. Any time a Republican gets close to the truth and is about to serve justice, the other side yells: "Russian disinformation." Of course, as we see now, that is a load of garbage.

As I have said on this floor several times before, our report was rooted in information from U.S. Government agencies and a left-aligned U.S. lobby shop that represented a corrupt Ukrainian gas company, and by now, the American people know that it is really the Democrats and liberal media that are connected to Russian disinformation. Just think of the Steele dossier. It was infected with Russian disinformation and paid for by the Democratic National Committee and Hillary Clinton's campaign.

The liberal media and those on the other side of the aisle were scared of the facts. They were scared that the American people would see the Biden family's deep and extensive link to foreign governments, including the Communist Chinese Government.

And once Senator JOHNSON and I released publically our findings, those same liberal outlets said the report repackaged old material and that there wasn't really anything new to it.